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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TWO MEN INDICTED IN KERN COUNTY METHAMPHETAMINE MANUFACTURING CONSPIRACY

FRESNO-- United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that a federal grand jury has returned a two count indictment charging ERNESTO MALDONADO HERNANDEZ, 40 of Daggett, California and NICOLAS PADILLA, 37, of Barstow, California with conspiring to manufacture methamphetamine and conspiring to obtain pseudoephedrine knowing it would be used to manufacture methamphetamine. The conspiracy is alleged to have been ongoing from September 15, 2007 until October 17, 2007.

This case is the product of a joint investigation by the Fresno Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

The maximum statutory penalty for manufacturing fifty or more grams of pure methamphetamine as alleged in the indictment, is life imprisonment. The charge of conspiring to possess pseudoephedrine knowing it would be used to manufacture methamphetamine is twenty years in prison. However, the actual sentence will be dictated by the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of factors, and will be imposed at the discretion of the court.

The charges are only allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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